

THE CITIZENS UNION

"TO ORGANIZE THE PUBLIC CONSCIENCE"

VOL. I. No. 1.

NEW YORK, JANUARY, 1908.

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A TEN YEARS STRUGGLE

FOR

Better Municipal Conditions.

Ten years ago the Citizens Union was organized to carry out the principles expressed in the preamble of the Report of the State Constitutional Convention, "that municipal should be separated from State and National politics, to the end that the business affairs of municipal corporations should be managed upon their own merits, irrespective of State and National politics." It is important to rehearse the great progress that has taken place in the realization of this idea.

The Republican party in New York county has accepted as one of its articles of faith, reiterated in convention after convention, that partisanship has no proper place in municipal affairs, and that men, who differ as to the expediency of national policies, may properly combine in securing honest and efficient municipal administration. Tammany Hall has been less prompt to see the light, but has conceded the point that co-operation with an independent organization in a municipal election does not impair a man's party regularity.

RESULTS ACHIEVED.

In the administration of the city and county we now have a non-partisan District Attorney; a Corporation Counsel who has never been identified with the sordid or prejudiced element of his party; non-partisan Commissioners of Police, Street Cleaning, Charities and Tenement House Department; the President of the Department of Taxes and Assessments and the Commissioners of Health and Docks, more closely identified with the party organization, are using their offices without the sacrifice of their power to partisan advantage. Bellevue and Allied Hospitals are managed by non-partisan trustees. Last year when the Mayor appointed the Board of Water Supply he expressly announced his determination to embrace the non-partisan theory in their selection and requested the nomination of candidates from the Chamber of Commerce, the Manufacturers' Association and the Board of Trade.

No doubt the administration of the city's affairs by Hon. Seth Low, for which the Citizens Union was primarily responsible, by giving an object lesson in the possibilities of non-partisan government, created a popular demand that the partisan has been obliged to recognize.

THE PURPOSE OF THE UNION.

To regard the Citizens Union as a political organization concerning itself solely or even chiefly with elections, is to miss its principal purpose. To permanently improve the city and borough administration by helpful criticism where possible, by exposure and denunciation where necessary, has been its major function. It recommended to the Low administration, the change in the system of assessing property for purposes of taxation which made possible the great civic improvements initiated under that administration; it drew the bill and worked out the plan for the municipalization of the Staten Island Ferry; when the Tenement House Laws



THE VERMIN IN THE DARK

By EDWIN MARKHAM

Author of "The Man with the Hoe," "Lincoln" and other Poems.

In storied Venice, down whose rippling streets
The stars go hurrying, and the white moon beats,
Stood the great Bell Tower, fronting seas and skies—
Fronting the ages, drawing all men's eyes;
Rooted like Teneriffe, aloft and proud,
Taunting the lightning, tearing the flying cloud.

It marked the hours for Venice: all men said
Time cannot reach to bow that lofty head:
Time that shall touch all else with ruin, must
Forebear to make this shaft confess its dust.
Yet all the while, in secret, without sound,
The fat worms gnawed the timbers underground.

The twisting worm, whose epoch is an hour,
Cavemed its way into the mighty tower;
And suddenly it shook, it swayed, it broke.
And fell in darkening thunder at one stroke.
The strong shaft, with an angel on the crown,
Fell ruining; a thousand years went down!

And so I fear, my country, not the hand
That shall hurl night and whirlwind on the land:
I fear not Titan Traitors, who shall rise
To stride like Brocken shadows on our skies:
These we can face in open fight, withstand
With reddening rampart and the sworded hand.

I fear the vermin that shall undermine
Senate and citadel and school and shrine—
The Worm of Greed, the fatted Worm of Ease,
And all the crawling progeny of these—
The vermin that shall honeycomb the towers
And walls of state, in unsuspecting hours.

were attacked in 1902, it took one of the largest opposing delegations to Albany which had ever attended a hearing on a similar measure; it fought for improved conditions of city transit and secured the passage of legislation necessary to give the Rapid Transit Commission power to handle the problem of new subways, without submitting to extortion by the owners of the existing corporation; it secured the reduction of the lease of the Brooklyn-Manhattan Rapid Transit Tunnel to 35 years; it has maintained for three years a "People's Lobby" consisting of a committee to analyze all legislative measures affecting the city, with a representative at Albany, who keeps the newspaper representatives informed as to the purport of all city bills introduced, a work conceded to be of the greatest value; it organized the Committee which secured the enactment of the Police Bills, identified with the name of Commissioner Bingham, which have done so much to bring about a healthier spirit in the Police Department; in three elections it succeeded in mobilizing a force of watchers at the polls, who did much to set a new standard for elections and whose work needs future development; it organized the Committee of Fifty to promote the nomination and election of competent and honest judges to all branches of the administration of justice.

BUREAU OF MUNICIPAL RESEARCH.

During the past eighteen months, it has added to its credit another achievement of the greatest magnitude by which it expects to assure to this community, the retention in office of responsible and competent officials and to accomplish this by a scientific and non-political enterprise. The establishment of the Bureau of City Betterment, now transformed into the Bureau of Municipal Research and organically separated from the Union, is this achievement. With a body of trained experts investigating the various city departments it expects to secure the adoption by the city of a system of accounting and reporting that will, to a great degree, automatically reveal the abuses of administration and make possible vast economies in the operation of the various departments.

It was by the simple disclosure of the actual facts of Mr. Ahern's misgovernment of the Borough of Manhattan and the report of those facts to the Commissioners of Accounts by the Bureau of Municipal Research that he was removed from office by the Governor. This was the least part of its accomplishment, the main thing being the introduction of new methods in all the sub-departments in the Borough President's office and the institution of a system of accounting that makes efficient management of the borough simple and its results intelligible to every voter. With the Bureau's cooperation, the Comptroller has adopted a uniform system of accounting, which has already been installed in five departments, and will be installed in others as rapidly as the Department of Finance is able to supervise the installation.

The Citizens Union has represented and continues to represent that constantly growing army of independent voters, who wish to see realized a policy of progress in municipal affairs, based on intelligent information and prudent action, rather than on violent prejudice and rash experiment.

FUTURE POLICY.

For the coming year, the Citizens Union proposes to continue its fight for the adoption of the Massachusetts Ballot; to investigate thoroughly the evils of illegal registration and fraudulent voting; to maintain the work of its Committee on Legislation; to procure a full and fair discussion of the suggestions made by the Charter Revision Commission, so that the legislation to be introduced by that body may represent the most intelligent sentiment of the city, and in general to take up from time to time such matters affecting our city as may seem to require scrutiny or criticism.

"THE CITIZENS UNION."

In order to carry on its work more effectively, the Citizens Union will publish, commencing January 15, a monthly bulletin, to be known as "The Citizens Union," which will deal with civic matters from a Citizens Union standpoint. Reviews of reports of city departments, interesting addresses on civic matters which now receive scant hospitality from the daily press, reports of the work of the City Committee and its standing sub-committees, notices of the work of the various kindred civic organizations now engaged in promoting the city's welfare in many directions, will make this publication of value to every one interested in good city government.

The Citizens Union invites the cordial co-operation of every friend of good government. It appeals particularly to young men whose idealism is shocked by the rampant materialism of the party organizations and who feel, nevertheless, that their patriotism must find an outlet in active, constructive, political activity. They will find in the Citizens Union ranks suggestion and opportunity without loss of self-respect or discreditable compromise.

ECONOMIC CLUB OF NEW YORK.

The Economic Club of New York is an organization of men in business and professional life for the purpose of discussing vital economic and social questions. These discussions take place at the four yearly dinners of the club. The first dinner was held last June. The subject was: "Is the Over-capitalization of Railroads an Evil?" The speakers were: Professor E. A. R. Seligman, Professor John Bates Clark, Professor Joseph French Johnson, Stuyvesant Fish, Francis Lynde Stetson, Alexander D. Noyes, Charles A. Conant and Henry Clews. The second dinner of the club was held at Hotel Astor on December 12. The subject was: "The Present Federal Policy in Relation to Trusts and Corporations." The speakers were: Hon. Charles A. Prouty of the Interstate Commerce Commission, District Attorney Langdon of San Francisco, Rev. Thomas R. Slicer, John G. Agar.

The third dinner will be held at Hotel Astor early in February. "The Currency System of the United States" will be the subject for discussion. Among the speakers will be Hon. William Jennings Bryan.

The officers of the club are: A. Barton Hepburn, president; Francis Lynde Stetson and Professor E. R. A. Seligman, vice-presidents; Professor Joseph French Johnson, treasurer; Robert Erskine Ely, secretary. The secretary's address is 23 West 44th St. The club now has about six hundred members. The annual dues are \$15, entitling a member to attend, without further payment, four successive dinners of the club. There is no initiation fee.

The office of the Economic Club is 23 West 44th St.

REPORT OF DECEMBER GRAND JURY

To Charles S. Whitman, Judge,
Court of General Sessions, Part 1.

The December Grand Jury respectfully submit to the Court, that through the process of our business some things have come to us to which we desire to call the attention of the Court.

The suggestion is made, whether in some instances the Magistrates of the City Courts could not dispose of cases that are now put on the Calendar for the Grand Jury.

We desire to refer to the fact that the Calendar arranged for the day's business is at times interrupted by introducing some special witness, and as happened in one instance, sending away sixty (60) complainants and witnesses, which must have caused them much inconvenience and possibly loss of their day's work. We suggest that when such special matter is to be brought to the attention of the Grand Jury, it be done with consideration for the Calendar.

The Grand Jury, under date of December 13, visited the City Prison, and was shown through the premises by the Commissioner and warden. We found in the prison at that date 685 prisoners, as follows:

491 Males,
63 Females,
122 Boys,
9 Federal Prisoners.

There is a normal accommodation for 630, which shows that 53 are compelled to double up in the cells. We found that there were cells for 80 boys and 120 boys in the prison.

The warden informed us that at the present time there are 62 prisoners awaiting sentence. We were told that in some instances prisoners were kept 30 days in prison awaiting action by the Grand Jury.

The city prison is unquestionably too full, and the Grand Jury urge the consideration of some plan to relieve this condition.

Under date of December 17, the Grand Jury visited the House of Detention for witnesses, making a thorough inspection of the premises. On this date there were under detention:

18 Males,
7 Females,
1 in the hospital.
—
26 in all.

It seems to the Grand Jury a cause for great regret, that out of the total of 26 inmates, some have been detained three, four, five and six months. In the case of Wm. Woods, he has been detained since June 28, and Kisag Jellalain since August 13. In one instance we found a mother with her young child, who had been there for several weeks.

We were informed a man left the House of Detention this week after a stay of one year; another left this week after a stay of six months.

The Grand Jury asks if it is not possible for the District Attorney's office to prevent the detention of innocent parties as witnesses for a longer period than sixty days.

While seeking justice in one case, injustice may be done in another case, and it seems contrary to our sense of freedom.

The Grand Jury, under this same date, visited the New York county jail, on Ludlow street, making a thorough inspection of the premises. There are 56 cells and of these 45 can take in two prisoners, making a total accommodation in the jail of 101. There were on this date 11 prisoners, all males, very seldom any females.

The Grand Jury submit for the consideration of the Sinking Fund Commissioners the practicability of transferring some of the inmates of the city prison to this jail, particularly the Federal prisoners.

On December 21, Saturday, the Grand Jury visited Blackwell's Island, and went first through the city

hospital. There are beds for 850 and on this date 630 were in the hospital. We most cordially commend the conditions prevailing in this place.

We went through the penitentiary from end to end. There were on this date 906 prisoners, as follows:

762 Males,
97 Females,
47 Boys.

There is accommodation for 1,115.

We went through the work house from end to end. There is accommodation for 1,160, and at the present time the place is full.

We visited the alms house. The city has under its care at this time, 2,691 poor, as follows:

1,434 Males,
1,257 Females.

At this date there is an excess of 150 inmates, who have to be cared for in corridors and halls.

The Grand Jury suggest the early consideration of improvement in ventilation, increased accommodation, and better or more responsible service for the alms house.

The Grand Jury suggest that the Commissioners of Charities and Correction see if it is not expedient to give more variety in the food supplied inmates in our institutions.

In each instance we went unannounced, so that our visit was not known until we appeared at each place. We desire to express our approval for the cleanliness and efficient manner in caring for the several institutions we have visited.

The Grand Jury having given time and attention to the Calendar; and making an inspection of institutions and departments under our city government cannot but feel a civic pride in the conditions which are ours, and while we are not unmindful that evil is always with us, it is evident that the rank and file of our officials are faithfully endeavoring to serve our city.

Respectfully submitted,

FREDERICK A. BOOTH,
Foreman.

December 24, 1907.

SANITATION OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

By William Paul Gerhard. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1907. Cloth, 5x7½ inches, 252 pp. Price, \$1.50.

For the purposes of this book, public buildings are divided by the author, who is a consulting engineer and author of some fifteen works on sanitary engineering, into three classes, according to their uses: (1) Those having a permanent population, such as hospitals, asylums, homes and prisons or jails. (2) Those having a daytime population only, schools, court houses, markets and abattoirs. (3) Those in which people congregate for a few hours only, as churches and theaters. The chapter on hospital sanitation deals with every phase of the subject from the selection of a suitable location of the building to the arrangements of each room. Many details applying to all public buildings are also dealt with here. The subject of theater and church sanitation, generally much neglected, is only of indirect intent from the municipal standpoint. To the sanitation of schools more space is devoted than to any other single topic. The sanitation of markets and abattoirs, with its frequent references to European practice, is interesting and instructive and serves to show how antiquated are most of the public markets now in use in the United States. Excellent bibliographies are given at the close of each chapter, affording opportunity to the student to follow up the comparatively elementary treatment in the book as deeply as he may wish.

MEMORANDUM ON THE BALLOT AND OTHER ELECTORAL MATTERS.

To His Excellency the Governor of New York:

THE BALLOT.

The Citizens Union of the City of New York respectfully urges that the success of the movement for the Public Service Commissions leaves the ballot as the subject of prime importance demanding the attention of the Legislature at the session of 1908. It is not too much to say that this subject this year might well take the place occupied last year by that in public attention. As the organic mode for expression of the popular will, an improvement in the ballot must underlie and precede substantial improvement in all departments of government, administrative, legislative and judicial. In view of the stand taken by you at the last session, little need be said on this subject, but in an effort to make some helpful suggestion toward the solution of the problems involved in this and allied questions we beg to call special attention to the following:

1. The number of signatures required by section 57 of the Election Law for nominating independent candidates is too large. The burden of making independent nominations is unnecessarily great. The time allowed is short, the expense and difficulty of gathering the required number of signatures by unorganized bodies are in many instances prohibitive, and where the onerous requirements are exceeded by only a narrow margin, contests, waged for the purpose by well-organized party machines, frequently consume the attention and energies of the independents which should be left free for the campaign itself. Innocent and respectable candidates are themselves imposed upon by fraudulent signatures to their petitions and are subjected unjustly to the odium of discredited nomination papers, even where such papers are not wholly rejected.

2. The same section of the Election Law should be further amended by the inclusion of a number of offices now wholly unprovided for, or left ambiguous. A number of offices have been created since the law was adopted, and the references in that section to "wards" and "counties in which there is a city of the first class" have become obsolete so far as New York City is concerned. Among the offices of this locality unprovided for or insufficiently provided for may be mentioned the following: Borough Presidents, Sheriffs, District Attorneys, County Judges, Surrogates, Municipal Court Judges, and Aldermen.

Moreover, the constitutional amendment adopted this autumn reducing the minimum population required of cities of the first class, makes these provisions wholly inequitable in the cities newly admitted to the class.

Certain other anomalous situations exist, e. g., 100 names will suffice to nominate an alderman in an aldermanic district not co-terminous with an assembly district; but if the aldermanic district happens to be co-extensive with the assembly district, 500 names are required.

3. The last election in New York City served to emphasize the need of the Massachusetts form of ballot. Candidates of recognized superiority failed of election and in some cases even ran behind their tickets because of the practical premium placed by the party column ballot upon indiscriminating voting, or because of their accidental position on the ballot on the same line with some rival candidate who attracted the special favor of the voters. Only in the better class districts was there found any general effort to discriminate between candidates according to their merits, and this effort was more than nullified in the districts where the pressure of the political machines is most felt and the electorate can least afford a show of independence.

We urge the Massachusetts form of ballot as the most important single improvement demanded in the entire range of electoral affairs at the present time.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS.

An extraordinarily large proportion of voters, including that class which is most conscientious in the performance of its franchise duties, was wholly unaware that any constitutional amendments were to be voted upon at this last election until handed the ballots at the polls. Ignorance of the meaning and purpose of the questions so submitted is notoriously common.

This deplorable condition may be ameliorated by handing to every voter at the time of his registration a sample ballot in which shall be printed:

(1) A brief statement in popular language of the purpose and effect of each proposed amendment; and

(2) The text of the constitutional provision with the amendment indicated by italics or brackets or both, as the case may be.

THE PRIMARY.

1. An official blanket ballot on which all candidates to be voted for at the primary shall appear is essential for the prevention of frauds in the receipt and counting of primary ballots.

2. But a more fundamental trouble with the primary as conducted at present is the complete impossibility of exercising, or indeed having, any real choice as between the candidates presented thereat.

For example, some districts in New York City have to-day as many as 600 or 700 names on the primary ballot if there is no contest, and twice that number on the two ballots if there is. The selection of seventy-nine delegates for each of two conventions, forty members for each of two committees, and a smaller number for certain other conventions and committees, is the problem which confronts the member who attends a party primary in one of the districts in Manhattan; and this is but typical. It is idle to expect any expression of choice except as between rival tickets as a whole in such case, and the resulting diffusion of responsibility and subjection of the mass to the will of the leader or boss makes, as a practical matter, such a primary an absurdity. Loss of interest on the part of the voters, absence of healthy competition, degeneracy and corruption in the organization, are the inevitable results of any such general condition.

The most important thing of all is to cut down the number of persons to be voted for at the primary to the point where the voter can know the persons for whom he is voting or can find out something about them, and can hold them responsible in some measure at least for the performance of their delegated duties. This reduction would apply both to committees and delegations to conventions. Due representation of voting strength could be given by means of proportional voting, if the parties cared to adopt such a rule. This is no novelty. It is now expressly permitted by section 10 of the Primary Law: as to delegates to conventions, and if not already the practice of the political parties, it is because they have found the creation of huge bodies of representatives the more satisfactory for the purposes of those directing them. Indeed, the mere selection of a leader or a small committee with absolute power to select the delegates to the conventions, or to select even the candidates themselves, thus frankly conforming the theory to the present practice, would be an improvement.

The number of names might be reduced by requiring representatives to be selected for election districts only, leaving the committees and delegations as large, or nearly as large, as they are at present; or by reducing the size of the committees and delegations, leaving them to be elected at large, whenever the party regulations so provide; or by a combination of both methods.

The mass of members to be elected to committees and delegations at present, arises through the adoption of too small units of representation. In the Republican party every 50 persons who voted for a Republican governor at the last preceding gubernatorial election (or major fraction thereof) are entitled to a member in the district committee; every 100 such persons are entitled to a member in the congressional and senatorial conventions; and every 200 such persons to a member in the County Committee and the City Committee. A similar situation, only more exaggerated, exists in the Democratic party. Inasmuch as many persons who are not enrolled in the parties vote for a governor, the representation of the actual members of the party entitled to participate in the primaries is even more diffused and excessive than these theoretical units of representation indicate.

But whatever regulation of the party rules is attempted in the primary law, and whatever the form of the official ballot to be adopted, all candidates should be put on precisely the same footing and should be put in nomination in the same way. The question at the primary is as to who shall represent the party for the coming year. In such a contest the representatives of the preceding year should be guaranteed no preferences.

DIRECT NOMINATIONS.

We advocate the adoption of legislation which will require the direct method of nomination for some offices, for the purpose of making a trial of such method. Many thinking men believe that the chief reason why voters are apathetic toward primary elections is because they do not know and cannot readily ascertain how proposed delegates will vote in party conventions, and that if voters were given the opportunity of casting their ballots directly for the candidates for party nominations they would not only manifest an interest in the primaries but would induce the nomination of a higher class of candidates, or at least prevent the nomination of conspicuously unfit candidates—too many of whom are now placed in nomination through the present irresponsible method of nomination. With the voters drawn to the primaries, and with a practicable means of expressing a real choice granted them, the primaries, in our judgment, would not go by default so frequently as they do today. Just so far as the direct method came into use, the difficulties arising from huge delegations to conventions would disappear.

FALSE REGISTRATION.

The situation in New York City as to false registration and the illegal voting of floaters is most unsatisfactory, indeed, shocking. It seems to be conceded on all sides that the fraudulent vote this year by organized bands of floaters and repeaters was larger than ever, probably enough to have determined the general result in New York County. The great offender is, as it has ever been, Tammany Hall; but it is charged, and apparently with some justification, that the administration of the office of State Superintendent of Elections has contributed to the deplorable situation. The low grade of election officers in a very large proportion of districts also aggravates the lack of confidence in the returns as a just record of the popular will. In the absence of more precise information as to the extent of such frauds and the measure of responsibility to be charged against the various elements contributing thereto, we make at the present time no specific presentation in this regard beyond urging a careful investigation into the conduct of the State Superintendent to the end that information may be obtained as to what relief must depend upon further legislation and what may be justly expected from an effective use of powers already in existence.

Respectfully submitted,

BALLOT REFORM COMMITTEE, CITIZENS UNION,
December 14, 1907.

By
A. S. BARD, Chairman.

THE CITIZENS UNION

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Breathes there a Patriot brave and strong
Would right his erring country's wrong,
Would heal her wounds, and quell her rage?
Let him with noble daring first
Curb Faction's tyranny accurst!
So may some future age
Grave on his bust with pious hand
"The Father of his native land:"
Virtue yet living we despise,
Adore it lost, and vanish from our eyes.—*Horace.*

SALUTATORY.

THE CITIZENS UNION is published to establish and maintain continuous communication between the City Committee and the general membership of the Citizens Union. As a practical matter it has been very difficult to induce the attendance of members at district meetings. Hence they are dependent on the scanty reports furnished by the daily papers for their knowledge of the activities of the governing body of the general organization. The lack of proper means of communication has hindered the development of efficient team work among men struggling for better municipal conditions. The demand has been steadily growing, but has wanted adequate expression. Our hope is that this publication will supply the need.

The brief story of our fight for municipal reform in this issue, is not published for the purpose of inducing any measure of self-gratulation. Nothing could be more fatuous than the belief that, because so much has been accomplished, we may rest upon our arms. The evil forces, which in the past branded New York municipal government with the stigma of national discredit, are not eliminated; they simply await a renewal of their opportunity. They feel that accident rather than the efficiency or vigilance of honest citizenship has been responsible for the checks which they have suffered. The gambler's instinct encourages the hope that with patience and persistence their turn will come again.

How much ground there is for their confidence is shown by the recent depressing report of the Municipal Voters' League on the deterioration of the Chicago Board of Aldermen, whose personnel had been so much improved by a series of campaigns of the good citizens of Chicago, under the leadership of

the Municipal Voters' League. Despite heroic efforts, the City of Chicago is obviously relapsing into the old slough from which we hoped that its rescue was permanent. Readers of Kipling will remember that "the return of the Jungle" is always imminent if the forces which have held it at bay relax their efforts. The campaign for the control of New York to be waged in 1909 promises to be the most momentous in our history. To say that it will be a fight for an empire is no mere hyperbole. The control of an annual expenditure verging on \$150,000,000 appeals in equal measure to imagination and cupidity. Despite the limitations imposed on patronage by the civil service system, it will menace the livelihood of thousands of officeholders, whose political activity will need no artificial stimulus. From present indications at the same election a Revised Charter and Constitutional Amendments enlarging the city's power to incur indebtedness for public works of a remunerative character will be submitted for adoption or rejection.

Hence every citizen jealous of his city's reputation should see that due preparation is made for the struggle before us. The most vital of the reforms demanded hinge upon better laws to govern our registration, primary and election systems. The Governor has voiced them in his recent message, extracts from which we have printed elsewhere. Unscrupulous "machines," which, by ridiculous primaries, fraudulent registration and "repeater" voting, nullify every year the votes of thousands of honest citizens, should be shorn of the special privileges conferred by our present primary and ballot laws, so that the independent voters shall have at least an equal chance. The views of THE CITIZENS UNION on this question are well set forth in the memorandum by Mr. A. S. Bard, chairman of our Committee on Ballot Reform, printed in this issue.

The report of the grand jury, which we reproduce, will repay perusal; in addition to the subjects which it finds worthy of commendation, it justly animadverts upon the abuses arising out of the imprisonment of witnesses in the House of Detention. That any man, however poor and defenceless, who is not even charged with crime, should be liable to detention from six to twelve months, is a blot on our system of criminal prosecution and a denial of the rights of citizenship.

As an illustration of what may be accomplished by scientific investigation, in correcting the evils of maladministration we invite our readers' attention to the story of the Ahearn case, told by Mr. Henry Bruere.

Correspondence from members of the Union on municipal topics is solicited and will be given such publicity and attention as our space will permit. THE CITIZENS UNION can be made a permanent and valuable factor in our municipal life, if the members of the Citizens Union will make the extension of its circulation a personal issue. We solicit and count upon their co-operation.

THE BROOKLYN SITUATION.

There is more independent political sentiment in Brooklyn than in any other borough of the city. Every independent movement which has been backed by reason, and some not so backed, has received support in Brooklyn.

When Coler carried the borough most people were surprised, including, no doubt, Mr. Coler. The Coler victory was not so much due to the attractive power of municipal ownership, though municipal ownership was then a factor, as to defection of the independent vote from the two regular parties. To many independent voters Mr. Coler was the most attractive proposition in sight.

A few recent incidents show the strong independent sentiment in Brooklyn. In the Eighth Senatorial District in 1906 C. H. Fuller, an Independent Democrat, defeated the Regular Republican nominee in one of the strongest Republican districts of the city, which in the previous election has given a Republican plurality of over 6,000.

In the election of 1907, W. I. Lee, whose career at Albany was highly endorsed by the Citizens Union, was re-elected to the Assembly from the Eighteenth District with an increased majority, notwithstanding the fact that his opponent made an unusually vigorous campaign in which he was supported by an organization of women teachers.

Another conspicuous example of independent political spirit in Brooklyn was afforded by the election of 1907. Despite a general Republican victory in Kings County, the Democratic candidate for District Attorney was triumphantly re-elected, and deserved re-election because he had administered his office with ability and without regard to politics. Though most independent voters supported Mr. Clarke for District Attorney, yet Francis X. Carmody, the able and clean candidate of the Independence League and Civic Union, received 30,000 votes. *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, on the day after the election, correctly stated that these 30,000 votes were not to be regarded as an asset of Mr. Hearst or his party, but that they were for any party that would claim them. It might also have stated that Mr. Clarke's vote was an indication of a pronounced sentiment in Brooklyn in favor of independence in municipal elections.

At the present time there is no well-organized independent party in Brooklyn. The so-called Independence League has practically ceased to exist and may be eliminated from the situation. During the summer and autumn of 1907, a Civic Union was organized, but it disintegrated through internal quarrels and was really never of much promise because of its failure to enlist the support of a sufficient number of Brooklyn's prominent citizens. The opportunity and duty of the Citizens Union are apparent. Brooklyn has independent voters, but no independent organization. About one-half of the districts have Citizens Union organizations, but all of these need strengthening, and we should be well organized in every district before the end of the year. The municipal campaign of 1909 will soon be upon us. We owe it to ourselves and to our city to be ready.

EXTRACTS FROM THE GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONS' LAW.

The public service commissions law has provided for the investigation and redress of grievances in connection with the operation of railroad, gas and electrical corporations. The necessity of having such an administrative board with adequate powers so that complaints may be heard and determined upon their merits, and that there may be suitable machinery for enforcing the rules of law requiring impartial and proper service upon reasonable terms, according to the exigencies of each particular case, cannot be gainsaid. No change is suggested in policy or structure, but such amendments as experience may show to be advisable to improve the text, to facilitate administration or more fully to carry out the intent of the act, should be supplied.

I recommend, however, an enlargement of the scope of the act. In view of the tasks to be assumed with respect to corporations already under supervision, it was not thought best at the outset to extend the act to other corporations. It should now be extended to telephone and telegraph companies and they should be brought under appropriate regulation as to rates, service, and other matters, similar to that which obtains in the case of the corporations at present subject to the law.

It is not advisable that separate commissions should be created; efficiency and economy will be promoted by concentration of supervisory powers. The increased labors of the public service commissions may be met by suitable departmental organization. But to avoid the overburdening of the commissions when organization is being perfected and precedents in various classes of cases are being established, I recommend that this extension of jurisdiction shall take effect on October 1, 1908.

NEW YORK CITY CHARTER AND DEBT LIMIT.

The commission, the appointment of which was authorized at the last session, "to inquire into the local government of the city of New York and the charter thereof and to suggest legislation thereon," has made a report which I submit to the Legislature. As the commission was directed to report on or before December 1, 1907, it did not have sufficient time to prepare a revised charter. But in its report it has made a valuable contribution to the work of revision in stating the principles which it regards as of fundamental importance, and in projecting the lines of improved governmental system and administration. This work should be prosecuted to completion without unnecessary delay, and I recommend that provision be made at as early a date as practicable for the appointment of a commission for this purpose.

Through the work of the public service commission of the first district existing facilities will be avoided to their utmost capacity to improve conditions of transit. But the natural increase in the demands for service, which is incident to the rapid growth of the city, necessarily outstrips any possible improvement in the facilities at present available.

The construction of new lines, particularly of new subway lines, is imperatively demanded. With respect to this matter the public service commission is subject to the provisions of the rapid transit act. By the referendum of 1894, the plan of municipal construction of rapid transit lines was decided upon, and there is no provision for building such lines with private capital except in the case of certain extensions of, and additions to, existing lines. It is urged, however, that the city's indebtedness has reached such an amount that there is not a sufficient margin available to enable the city to provide for the construction of needed subways. The charter revision commission recommends that the constitution should be so amended as to exclude

from the computation of the city's debt limit all bonds or evidences of indebtedness issued for purposes which produce revenues in excess of their maintenance charges. I concur in this recommendation and I present it to you for appropriate action, looking to the submission to the people of the proposed amendment in suitable form.

In the meantime the question whether any changes in the rapid transit act should be made in order to facilitate subway construction should receive your most serious consideration.

ELECTIONS.

The Ballot.—I renew the recommendation for the adoption of a simplified form of ballot, without the party column, in which the names of candidates for the respective offices shall appear but once grouped under the names of the offices.

The present form of ballot is unnecessarily cumbersome. In some instances there have been on one ballot as many as seven separate columns of independent nominations and the name of the same candidate has appeared three and four times in as many columns. No candidate should have more than one place on the ballot, so that there may be the smallest possible opportunity for fraudulent contrivances to secure the advantages of duplication. Appropriate designation of party may be placed opposite each name.

Each voter should be required to express his choice for each office separately. All parties will be placed upon the same footing and the effect will be to encourage the nomination of candidates who will not suffer by reason of separate consideration. The uncertainty which from time to time develops with regard to the proper method of voting split tickets should be removed, and the best way of accomplishing this result is to put the voters on the same basis. Experience in other States shows that partisan fears of the effect of a simpler ballot are unfounded. There should be no unwillingness to provide for the freest expression at the polls of the popular will, and public policy demands that the strength of party organization should be maintained by the quality of its acts and candidates, and the principles for which it stands, and that it should not be permitted to proceed along the line of least resistance by means of favoring arrangements of our election machinery.

Constitutional Amendments.—Some means should be devised to familiarize the voters with proposed constitutional amendments, to the end that more intelligent consideration may be secured. Provision for the delivery of the text of the amendment to the voter at the time of registration in districts where personal registration is necessary, and suitable notification elsewhere, may be advisable.

PRIMARIES AND DIRECT NOMINATIONS.

The urgent need for primary reform is generally recognized. There is wide difference between effective organization in the interest of the party and the misuse of such organization for purely selfish purposes. Within itself the party constitutes a democracy, and its members should be protected against despotic proceedings.

To prevent frauds provision should be made for an official primary ballot. But the form of the ballot should put all the enrolled voters upon an even footing, without any advantage to those who are in power for the time being, and should encourage discrimination in the selection of party representatives.

There should be unrestricted opportunity for the expression of the wishes of the members of the party in the selection of candidates for office. Only in this way can healthy party activity be secured. And in order that the enrolled voters should be

encouraged to take part in party proceedings, and that the will of the party in the choice of candidates may be expressed, and not defeated by a perversion of party machinery, I am in favor of direct nominations. I renew the recommendation made at the last session that provision should be made for such nominations, at the primary, of candidates for office. In my judgment it is advisable that the provision should take the permissive form; that is, that a method of direct nominations shall be defined which party organizations may adopt by suitable rule. I favor this course because I believe that in this manner legislation can be had which will secure a fair trial of the plan and pave the way for its general adoption in the light of persuasive experience.

RACE TRACK GAMBLING.

As amended in 1895, the Constitution (Article I, section 9) provides:

"Nor shall any lottery or the sale of lottery tickets, pool-selling, book-making, or any other kind of gambling hereafter be authorized or allowed within this State; and the Legislature shall pass appropriate laws to prevent offenses against any of the provisions of this section."

Following the adoption of this provision the Legislature in 1895 amended the penal code (Section 351) so as to make it a felony to engage in pool-selling or book-making at any time or place, or to record bets or to keep or occupy any place or stand for such purpose. It made an exception, however, of cases where an exclusive penalty was otherwise provided.

At the same time, by the so-called racing law (Laws of 1895, chapter 570, sections 17-18) a different and exclusive penalty was provided for book-making and pool-selling on authorized race tracks, provided no memorandum or token of the bet was delivered. This exclusive penalty consists of the forfeiture of the amount wagered, to be recovered in a civil action.

In writing for the court of appeals with reference to the construction of these sections of the racing law, Chief Justice Cullen said (*People v. Stedeker*, 175 N. Y. on page 64):

"It will thus be seen that the effect of these two sections is to relieve any person who either makes or records a bet, wager or pool upon the race course from any liability to punishment except the recovery by the other party of the money bet or deposited. There is but one qualification on this exemption, that no record or registry of the bet shall be delivered to the other party or to some third person for him. In other words, the question whether the offender is a felon or not depends upon whether he delivers, what I may term, a voucher or evidence of the bet to the other party. If he abstains from this he may bet, wager and sell pools on the races and record and register the same free from other liability than the civil penalty. * * *"

The constitutionality of this discrimination has been upheld by the court of appeals upon the ground that in carrying out the provisions of the constitution it was in the discretion of the Legislature to fix the penalty and that in the cases specified the Legislature could make the penalty simply a forfeiture of the bet, to be recovered in a civil action. The question for the court was simply one of legislative power.

A different question, however, is presented to the Legislature in the exercise of its discretion, and that is the question of legislative policy and of a substantial, and not a mere technical, compliance with the explicit constitutional provision. The Constitution makes it the duty of the Legislature to enact appropriate laws to prevent pool-selling, book-making, and other kinds of gambling. Experience has shown that the laws enacted have not accomplished the purpose which the constitution defines. The evils and demoralizing influences, and it may be

"GRAFT IS TREASON."

DISTRICT ATTORNEY LANGDON'S ADDRESS BEFORE THE CIVIC FORUM.

Hon. William H. Langdon, District Attorney for the city and county of San Francisco, one of the conspicuous figures in the recent successful struggle for the overthrow of "graft" rule in San Francisco, addressed the Civic Forum in Carnegie Hall on Wednesday, December 11. He was greeted by a large audience, whose prolonged applause at the termination of his address indicated the profound impression which he made.

After sketching the history and the vicissitudes of San Francisco in the more remote past, he addressed himself to recent events, stigmatizing graft as *treason*. On this topic he said in part:

"The divine right of kings," or "the might which makes right" never yet raised a despotism like that of graft. There have been many virtuous kings, and many honest feudal lords, but there never can be one despotism of graft in government which could found its rule upon a semblance of the moral law!

GRAFT WEAKENS DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE.

WHAT DOES GRAFT MEAN? What does it mean when people lose faith in democracy, grow cynical of government and cease to resist their political evils? What does it mean when the people of a great city are so completely cowed into non-resistance by the overshadowing figure of the Labor Party Boss that they let him capture, not only his own party primaries, but a majority of delegates in the Republican party and a forty per cent. balance of power in the Democratic party, thus giving him control of every party in the city? What does it mean when the people elect as Governor of the State of California a man nominated by the railroad machine in a most shamefully controlled Republican convention, after the chief counsel for the Harriman railroads in California has paid \$14,000 to Boss Ruef to deliver his delegates for the nomination of Governor Gillette? It means the paralysis of the democratic will to resist intrusion upon free government and the "inalienable rights of men." Then do men begin to express their political cynicism in such phrases as "No decent man can participate in politics," "There is one law for the rich and another for the poor," "Reform is futile, it will be as bad as ever in another term." Then honest citizens will begin to say, "What's the use of resisting further?" and they will fly from the political battlefields, making a scattered retreat before the well-organized forces of the political machine. "What's the use?"—that is the deadly skeptical phrase that graft puts upon the lips of men. That is the disheartening sentiment which is killing our reverence for democratic government, a reverence which has been at the bottom of every great achievement in our national life.

There they stand in opposition to each other—democracy and graft! One upholds the human and the constitutional rights of all; the other would betray them to the corrupt few. One affirms an everlasting belief that the whole people may ultimately govern wisely and justly; the other sneers at the idealistic faith of men and would give government over to the unscrupulous. The struggle between them is on. One must go down. It is for you fellow citizens to decide whether the heavy investment in suffering made for humanity by the common people through the long centuries of struggle for popular suffrage has been in vain! It is for you to determine whether the honor of democratic government is worth fighting for! Whether the ancient sanctities of governmental righteousness are worth the combat! Or, whether in the face of the enemy and under fire we shall commit the horrible treason of retreat!

THE USE OF IMMUNITY.

Leadership, public opinion and expert service—these are adequate to cope with ordinary forms of crime. But the crime of graft is a secret crime. Efficiency demands the use of the privilege of immunity. Legal evidence is always necessary to indictment and conviction. Where crime is secret and only the perpetrators are present the evidence must be gotten from criminals. The disinterested are not present at its commission. Much as we regret to let any criminal go free, it is a choice between immunity and letting secret crime eat out the vitals of democracy.

In deciding where immunity should fall, circumstance and the necessity for getting at the very sources of evil determined where immunity should be granted. At the beginning of the governmental investigation we went to the men of the public service corporations and asked them to assist us with whatever knowledge they had so that we could clean up the government. But they protested that there had been no questionable financial dealings with the government for their franchises. They kept up this denial for five months. Since the bribers would not give the evidence, we got it from the bribe-takers, both parties being equally guilty.

Then the whole graft system was seen, and its sources revealed. To the corrupt officials, the United Railways had paid \$200,000 for an overhead trolley franchise; the Pacific States Telephone \$55,000 to keep the Home Telephone Company out; and the Home Telephone Company \$100,000 to get in; the officials taking the money from both sides and then awarding the franchise to the one which had paid the most money. The prize-fight trust paid \$20,000 for a monopoly of the prize-fight privileges. Other large sums of money were paid to Ruef and Schmitz by the keepers of brothels and gambling joints. The coming of the prosecution stopped the payment of \$45,000 by the Parkside Realty Company for a street railway privilege, and checked the water deal by which a property worth \$1,000,000 was to be sold to the city for \$10,000,000, of which Schmitz and Ruef were to get between them \$1,000,000. The Mayor and the managing head of the Telephone Company were soon sentenced to the penitentiary. The Boss confessed and awaits sentence. Still others will share the same just fate.

Immunity had to be given in order that crime might be punished, and by force of circumstances it was given to the Supervisors that the very tap roots of political corruption might be torn from the soil in which they thrived. Without this extended immunity we could only have convicted one obscure Supervisor. We granted immunity, because this prosecution had a moral as well as a legal significance. It was time to stop the cynicism of common men when they viewed democracy and said it was only for the powerful and the rich, that the poor must go to jail for the theft of bread and the rich escape for the theft of privileges, the purchase of men's souls and the degradation of government. It was time to stop the confident effrontery of the irresponsible and criminal rich who commit crime and rest back, thinking that they can buy judges as they bought legislators and executives, and knowing that they can buy legal talent to interpose every technicality in every courtroom until justice is a human travesty tangled in its own web.

We are after the "men higher up" because they are the severest menace to our institutions, the enduring factors that bribe each Board of Supervisors as they come and go. We are after the "man higher up" so as to make criminal acquisition unprofitable in terms of human desire. We are after the "man higher up" so that young men and women growing up in this and other communities will once more believe with ardent fervor, not only that dishonesty does not pay, but that of all the goods on this earth, the greatest treasure is a straightforward life.

THE CIVIC FORUM.

The Civic Forum aims to be the most important non-partisan platform in America for the discussion of public questions. Ten meetings are to be held in Carnegie Hall this season. At the opening meeting on November 20, addresses were delivered by Governor Hughes and Judge David J. Brewer of the U. S. Supreme Court, on "Public Office." Hon. William H. Langdon, District Attorney for the county and city of San Francisco, was the principal speaker at the second meeting on December 11. His subject was, "The Struggle Between Graft and Democracy." Professor Paul Milyoukov, member of the Third Duma for St. Petersburg, leader of the Social Democrats of Russia, will deliver an address on "Constitutional Government for Russia" on Tuesday evening, January 14, in Carnegie Hall. Bishop Potter will preside. Professor Milyoukov came to America for the sole purpose of speaking for The Forum, during the three weeks' recess of the Duma, at the time of the Russian Christmas.

At subsequent meetings this season addresses are to be made by: Secretary Taft; Hon. William Jennings Bryan; Governor Folk of Missouri; Professor Alderman of the University of Virginia; Frederick van Eeden, the foremost poet and author of Holland, who visits America for this purpose, and others.

Rev. Lyman Abbott is chairman of the Council. The vice-presidents of The Forum are: Hon. William H. Taft, Hon. Oscar S. Straus, Rev. Edward Everett Hale, Rt. Rev. Henry C. Potter, President Samuel Gompers, President John Mitchell, Judge David J. Brewer, Hon. William Jennings Bryan, Most Rev. John Ireland, Hon. Nahum J. Bachelder, John Graham Brooks. The trustees are: Robert J. Collier, Elgin R. L. Gould, A. Barton Hepburn, George McAneny, Isaac N. Seligman, Judge Morgan, J. O'Brien, Emerson McMillin, James B. Reynolds, Marcus M. Marks. The executive head of The Forum is the director, Robert Erskine Ely, whose office is at 23 West 44th St., New York City.

In the struggle between graft and democracy let us see clearly that defeat means the ultimate death of free institutions. Above the misleading cries that emerge from our imperfect social ethics let us have the courage to stand for high things. With leaders who are not afraid, with an honest people who are willing to support the truth, with expert service and an effective criminal procedure, democracy can be saved from its new-found weaknesses. It has been saved in San Francisco, and it can be redeemed elsewhere. Every moral uplift in the community leaves its permanent contribution—in this we must have deep faith.

More than a hundred years ago this nation of ours was born. It was born in the dream period of American life, when the fathers of the republic were worshipping the far-away ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity. Its cradle was a great Revolution. Its first swaddling clothes, a newly-woven government of democratic fiber. A hundred years have passed, and with it the innocence and the childlike faith of our youth. The grown nation has come to its strength and found its weaknesses. As the caretakers of its destiny, we are bound to bring it into a vigorous manhood, that shall have a mighty scorn for the weakness of its life and a mighty devotion to the superb virtues promised by its earlier years. To do this we must face the situation of our democratic life frankly, with only the truth in mind. And knowing this, we must attack our difficulties with courage and persistence, and with that hope which is the very web of human progress, that right is bound ultimately to prevail.

THE NEED OF SUPPORTING PUBLIC OPINION.

No moral issue can be supported by leaders alone. No cause can be trusted to just the talented few. Great principles must be independent of the coming and the going of particular men. They must become part and parcel of the mass, of the race, of the nation. Let the strong and devoted of earth go about their chivalric business of public service. They will make their own supporting public opinion as they go along, however they are misunderstood at first by common men. The majority of men are honest, and they will respond to every uplift in the long run.

The need is that the men who reform shall so conduct themselves as to be all that their cause is. The over-worship of the bauble of personal reputation, the constant presence of overweening egotism, the personal prosecution of men in the impersonal prosecution of offenders, the lack of conservatism in tearing down the reputations of the once great, the maintenance of more secrecy in the public business than is required for efficiency—all these tend to alienate, as they rightly should, the public opinion upon which any great work must rest. The general character of a movement is as well revealed by its small acts as the general character of an individual. It can create public confidence or it can wreck it.

The public press, next to the actual conduct of the prosecution itself, is the best asset in the establishment of a supporting public opinion. Against the penny-a-liner in the weekly press, and the petty correspondents of the outside press, too frequently purchased outright by the grafters, the daily press of San Francisco, giving information to the people twice a day, supported the graft prosecution loyally, and made it possible for the people and the leaders to work together. In the moral upbuilding of a nation a decent press system is as essential in carrying truth and ideas from the sources of supply to the remotest centers of distribution, as is a system of railroads in the industrial development of a country.

THE USE OF EXPERT SERVICE.

But there is another need. Willing leaders and faithful public are fundamental, but the government work of today also requires expert service. No one man elected to public office can be expert enough in

these days to meet every task which comes within his domain. Particularly true is this at a time of crisis. The work of the modern public officer is mainly executive. He should know his duty, know how to get it done, and then see that it gets done. The notion that a man has betrayed his office into private hands because he has dared to seek and accept expert service other than those normally at his command, is a false notion, which must be banished if democracy is to be efficient.

In the city of San Francisco we were confronted with some of the worst criminal conditions of the century. Behind those conditions were the shrewd minds of the business world, the most unscrupulous manipulators in the field of politics and limitless wealth, which purchased the best legal talent of the nation, and a horde of private detectives and professional jury fixers. They went about the city spreading false reports and innuendo, prejudicing the minds of men. They refused to vote expense funds, and cut down the salary appropriations of the District Attorney's office. They shadowed the movements of each member of the prosecution's staff. They stalked into the courts of justice with their retinues of legal talent, and used every technicality to defy the law. They tried the prosecution, the judges, the juries, every one in fact but the criminal of the case in question. They tried to fix the juries. They poured money into the political campaign to defeat officers who were trying to enforce the law.

But we were not to be faced down. We had stood up in the popular assemblies and pledged ourselves solemnly to the law. And we were resolved to STAND by our oaths. We united all the forces that could make for success, and met great criminals and their talents with the law-abiding and theirs. Against the corrupt moneys we placed the hundred thousand dollars offered by Rudolph Spreckels and his associates. We confronted their detectives with William J. Burns, the greatest detective in the Federal service. They set up their cross-examiners and their jury pleaders in the courtroom, and we combated them with the greatest prosecutor that ever appeared before a jury, Mr. Francis J. Heney, a lawyer who could not be coaxed into a dirty job by any promise of big profits. They organized a law office of a dozen expert office lawyers, and we outdid them with such legal experts as Hiram Johnson, J. J. Dwyer and Charles W. Cobb.

We met the forces of graft with the best honorable and lawful weapons within our command, organizing the forces of resistance as they had never been organized before. We were criticised, but we tried to be efficient. And so long as our institutions demand it, the same kind of a fight shall be made. The public duty must be done, and it is our business to organize the means by which it SHALL BE DONE, a righteous God and an honest people willing!

A CITIZEN'S DUTY.

The pitiful thing in the situation nowadays is that when a man does take an interest in public affairs he is suspected of wanting public office, and everyone wants to know what he is after. We have left this thing too long to a few men who have appointed themselves managers of our government. We must not have professional politicians installed permanently in office and in politics.

It is the duty of every American citizen to take part in politics. He has no right to leave that duty to a few people. A party consisting of a single class or a single occupation is bad. We must get together as citizens on a basis of the common life of man, with all its classes and occupations. We must take up the duties of citizenship with more continuity. We must have organization—permanent organization, something that will look after details and keep the citizens informed.

BENJAMIN IDE WHEELER.

CIVIC LECTURE COURSE.

A very interesting series of lectures for persons desirous of acquainting themselves with the practical working of various city departments is being delivered at Public School 165, 108th Street and Amsterdam Avenue. The first lecture was delivered on Wednesday evening, January 8, by Lawson Purdy, president of the Department of Taxes and Assessments, on "The New York Tax Department. How its Burdens are Distributed." Apart from such qualifications as he may possess by virtue of his incumbency of his office, Mr. Purdy is widely recognized as the leading American expert on matters of taxation. He is repeatedly consulted by Legislatures of States contemplating changes in their systems of taxation. It were very desirable that taxpayers generally could be induced to listen to President Purdy's explanation of how assessments are laid. They would then have a much clearer idea than citizens generally possess as to the methods whereby the city revenue is raised. Unlike many experts, Mr. Purdy has a remarkable faculty for making his very technical topic interesting, and in his hands it assumes a human quality which few suspect it of possessing.

Mr. Purdy briefly described the financial system of the city to show the part played by the Tax Department in the city organization. It is the duty of the Tax Department to determine the contribution of each taxpayer to the common purse, and the character of the employees is of the utmost importance. Mr. Purdy said that the men holding the most important positions have been in the city service for from ten to thirty years, and that it is due to their faithful and intelligent work that the methods of the New York assessors furnish a model for other cities and that the cost of the department is lower in proportion to the assessed value of the property than in any other large city in the country. He presented some startling figures to show how rapidly the value of real estate increases, and how well the assessors are keeping pace with the growth. It requires unceasing vigilance so to increase the assessment on real estate that is rising in value as not to burden unduly the real estate that is stationary or declining.

The lectures and lecturers (all men of signal proficiency in their topics) making up the balance of the course, are:

January 15—"The City Plan." Frederick S. Lamb, former president of the Architectural League of America.

January 22—"The Tenement House Department and Its Work." Lawrence Veiller, former first Deputy Tenement House Commissioner.

January 29—"The Health Department." James C. Bayles, Ph. D., C. E., former president of the Health Department.

February 5—"The Police Department." Gherardi Davis, former Deputy Police Commissioner.

February 12—"Our Water Supply; How We Get It and How We Waste It." Thomas A. Fulton, former secretary of the Citizens Union.

February 19—"The Civil Service." George McAneny, former secretary of the National Civil Service Reform Association.

February 26—"New York, the World Metropolis." Hon. John DeWitt Warner, former president of the Municipal Art Commission.

It would be difficult to conceive of any more useful purpose to which Dr. Leipziger's varied lecture work could be put than this of acquainting the people with the actual methods of administering the government which they create and under which they live.

If this lecture course shall initiate a demand for publicity of methods of municipal administration, it can hardly fail to be of immense value and importance to good citizenship.

THE CASE OF JOHN F. AHEARN

In 1903 Tammany elected John F. Ahearn, a forceful district leader, to the office of President of the Borough of Manhattan, on a legislative record of service to teachers, firemen, police and orphans. Mr. Jerome, popular idol, publicly endorsed Mr. Ahearn as one of the cleanest of the Tammany leaders. His family life was exemplary, his eagerness to be of service undisputed.

In 1905 Mr. Ahearn was re-elected, even the Hearst opposition only serving to swell his majority. The office of the President of the Borough is one of close relation to the daily comfort of the people. He has charge of the street pavements and of the sewerage system, of public buildings and building operations, and under his control is the great system of public baths throughout Manhattan. Here was a popular idol. How had he governed? The bureau sought to find out. To secure information proved a laborious task. The records of his office were uninforming, his published reports meaningless. The bureau's report, when published, although an unvarnished statement of fact, was stamped by Mr. Ahearn as a "mass of misinformation." It was sufficiently disconcerting, however, to prompt him to ask for an official investigation. The investigation was ordered of the Commissioners of Accounts by Mayor McClellan. These officials proceeded to react in the expected manner. Instead of investigating, they undertook the preparation of briefs in reply to every statement contained in the bureau's voluminous pamphlet. It happened, however, that the bureau continued its investigation after the publication of its pamphlet. Among other things, it made a careful examination, analysis and tabulation of the facts shown on the thousands of vouchers drawn by Mr. Ahearn during his incumbency in office. Armed with these facts it convinced the Mayor and Corporation Counsel that the Commissioners of Accounts were wantonly whitewashing Mr. Ahearn. Immediately a special corporation counsel, Mr. John Purroy Mitchell, was placed in charge of the inquiry, the co-operation of the bureau invited, and a real investigation begun. The Borough President, finding that the investigation was unexpectedly earnest, exerted every effort to block its progress. When the public hearings began and the unpleasant truth was told or reaffirmed, Mr. Ahearn lost all his aplomb. For three years he had enjoyed the reputation of being "a pure and competent official." No one knew in what respect he was competent, but not having extraordinary evidence to the contrary, competency was conceded to his purity and popularity. The public learned that for three years Mr. Ahearn had been spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on supplies and repairs without the slightest pretense of conserving the city's interest. Mr. Ahearn saw published the fact that thousands of dollars had been paid by him to the political agent of a fellow district leader, in the guise of a supply company, who reaped a profit of from 30 to 300 per cent. on the goods bought by him and sold to the city. When Mr. Ahearn realized that his neglect and indifference had gone too far for him to persuade the public that pavements full of holes were in good condition, the popular leader lost consolation in his popularity and, forgetting his vaunted competency, suddenly began to fear removal from office by the Governor. A lifelong friend of the people and enemy of reformers suddenly turned reformer himself. His chief subordinate, a fellow district leader, he turned out of office, charging him with responsibility for his own neglect. One after another "trusted" subordinate was removed. Mr. Ahearn had capitulated before facts. The bureau's "misinformation" suddenly appeared the inexorable truth.

Acting on the facts educed in the investigation and set forth in the report of the Commissioners of Accounts, the City Club of New York brought

charges against President Ahearn before Governor Hughes, with a petition for his removal. The hearing on these charges consumed nearly four weeks, the Governor himself presiding. Mr. Ahearn's sole defense was that he had been uninformed of the acts of his subordinates, and that when the facts were brought to his attention he immediately took steps to correct the abuses revealed. With tears in his eyes he pleaded his personal innocence of any wanton maladministration. He declared that he had repeatedly inquired of his subordinates whether this or that transaction was proper, and had granted his approval only on being reassured of its propriety. In defense of his appointment to administrative offices of men with only political qualifications, he declared that they were as competent as he; that he had been twice chosen by the people for his important administrative office, and that in choosing him a second time they had sanctioned his selections of district leaders as his chief subordinates.

In this defense Mr. Ahearn summarized the whole case of the Bureau of Municipal Research. To Mr. Ahearn the uninformed sanction of the public justified any administrative practice pursued prior to the expression of this sanction. It is the bureau's contention that, had the facts of the first year of Mr. Ahearn's administration been made public at the close of that year, instead of at the close of the third year, practices then found prejudicial to the public interest would not have been tolerated. Had the Citizens Union had the information respecting Mr. Ahearn's administration in the fall of 1905 that was available to it in 1907, there would have been no want of issues. Money wasted by Mr. Ahearn in two years, in the hands of the Health Department, would have saved additional lives; in the hands of the Tenement House Department, strengthened the enforcement of the housing law. The Citizens Union might have seriously shaken the popularity of the friend of the poor by calling attention to public benefits denied by the waste and incompetence of his administration.—*The Independent*.

CIVIC WORK OF THE PEOPLE'S INSTITUTE.

1. Public Meetings at Cooper Union. Educational work on a large scale is carried on four nights weekly in the great hall of the Cooper Union, seating 1,600. On Sunday evenings the meetings are upon ethical subjects. On Monday, Tuesday and Friday evenings the subjects relate to social problems; e. g., historical or comparative studies of government, biographies of statesmen, treatments of particular political or economic institutions, and finally present public questions.

For example, during the next two months the subjects to be treated include two lectures upon Democracy in New Zealand, addresses upon Panama, the Philippines, the recent Peace Conference, the development of the new Northwest, six lectures on The Challenge of Socialism to Modern Society by Professor John Graham Brooks, and three lectures by Professor Frank Parsons and other speakers summarizing the report of the Municipal Ownership Commission and the Civic Federation.

Open discussion follows all these addresses, which gather from 1,000 to 1,700, almost entirely working men, and which furnish one of the most important agencies in the city for informing the people upon live social questions. Both those attending the meetings, and those who read the press reports following.

2. Legislative or Forum Work. For eight years the Institute has utilized its large touch with the people not merely to inform but to direct public opinion and legislation on important questions; e. g., it played the chief part in securing for the city the ownership of the first subway, through a great mass meeting held in 1899, and in more recent years has worked in close touch with the Legisla-

ture, organizing mass meetings, sending delegations, and doing committee work upon a wide variety of legislative bills. It has played a notable part in defeating numbers of franchise grabs, and last year in helping to push through the Public Utilities Bill.

During the next few months a portion of the Friday evening of each week (as soon as the session of Legislature is well under way) will usually be given to some account of the work of the Legislature presented either by a member thereof, or by one or more speakers, closely in touch with the course of events at Albany. At these meetings reports on progress of measures interesting to the people will be presented and, if occasion demands, discussion may follow, resolutions be passed, or other action taken.

3. Civic Work Through Local Clubs. The Federate Civic Council, organized by the Institute, brings to monthly meetings delegates from twelve civic organizations of the people, meeting in various parts of Manhattan (one also in Brooklyn). All these organizations carry on local improvement work in their districts; e. g., enforcement of sanitary, tenement house and street cleaning ordinances; also hold lectures and discussions, usually public; watch and confer with their representatives in the Legislature, and, in a measure, deal with legislative questions, especially when these affect their own districts. Through their affiliation with the Institute these organizations keep more fully in touch with public affairs and are placed in position to co-operate more readily with other bodies. The membership of this Council has rapidly enlarged during this season, and it is expected will grow further, especially now that the active season of the year is on.

The questions of primary and ballot reform have specially interested a number of the local clubs associated with the Institute, and during January and the following months a number of meetings have been arranged for by the associations upon a primary reform. The Federate Civic Council, working with the Institute, has planned a number of such meetings in the different districts wherein the various clubs are situated, to distribute literature, and, without committing itself to any particular plan of primary reform, to inform the people as fully as possible upon the need of some change in the present law.

During December a conference was held by representatives of the associated clubs with the Assemblymen of their districts. A number of the chief questions expected to be presented to the Legislature were informally discussed, and a close working touch between the representatives in the Assembly and Senate to the local clubs was assured.

A special committee is now organizing to deal with the problem of improving our Municipal Court administration. Reports on conditions in these courts or suggestions as to procedure will be welcomed by the Institute from either lawyers or laymen.

Individuals living in any district in which a local club associated with the Institute exists are invited to affiliate themselves therewith. The Institute will be glad to send to any making request list of its associate organizations or any other information concerning its work. Communications should be sent to Charles Sprague Smith, Managing Director or to Michael M. Davis, Jr., Secretary, 318 East 15th St., New York.

The municipality of Milan will take entire charge of the street advertising on January 1, 1908, and it is said that its example will be followed by Turin, Bologna, Leghorn, Naples, and Savona.

The city authorities have decided to abolish the use of "sandwich-men" because the unkempt appearance of the persons so-called is considered detrimental to the beauty of the streets.